

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 37 | Min 23 | Humidity 28%

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Sensex 73,730

Nifty 22,419

Gold 71,486

Silver 80,745

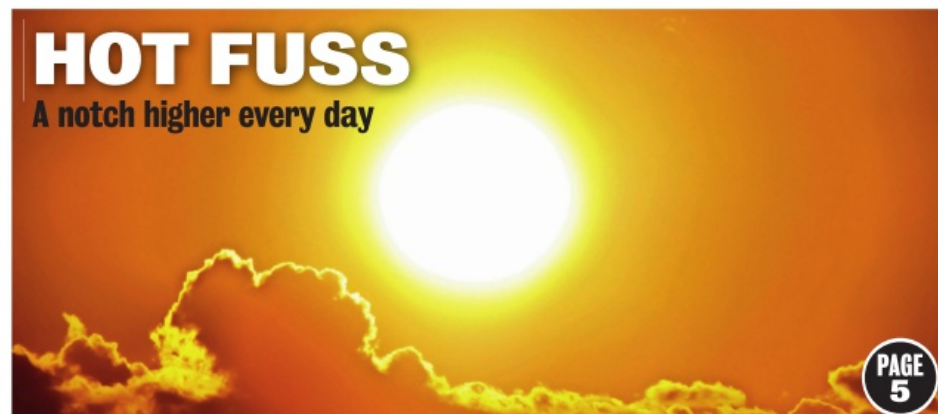
Dollar 83.40

Euro 89.21

GBP 105.40



PAGE 3



PAGE 5

6,000-odd civic workers employed on contract for many years raise objections against BBMP regularising those with minimum service

INSIDE JOB

BBMP's selective hiring of civic workers for 4,000 posts in 2018 invited criticism

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The recruitment of civic staff/pourakarmikas has been a tough nut to crack for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), especially in the recent years.

The Palike has been making headlines for all the wrong reasons attempting to fill up vacancies for the posts of civic workers in the last five years. The BBMP's selective hiring of civic workers for 4,000 posts in 2018 invited much criticism.

The BBMP also made an attempt to fill up 3,673 posts of civic workers last year but releasing the list of selected candidates was kept in abeyance due to objections from those who have been working on contracts for many years.

It is alleged that some officials and supervisors of the solid waste management department have selected people who have been working for the last few years and neglected those who have been working on contract-basis for more than two or three decades.

The BBMP has fixed 55 years as the maximum age for the candidates applying for the posts of civic workers.

"Some of the officials and supervisors recommended the names of those who bribed them and neglected those who have been working for many years. There are many civic workers who have attained the age of 55 years. Instead of recommending regularisation of services of



“The list of 3,673 civic workers selected last year will be made available alongside those selected for 11,307 posts announced in March 2024

— M Subbarayudu, general secretary, Bangalore City Corporation Workers' Federation

those people, the officials and supervisors recommended those who could afford to bribe them. Regularisation of services of those who attained the age

above 50 and below 55 years would be a boon for them as regularisation of services ensures job security for such people,” said Dr Babu, president,

Bangalore City Corporation Workers' Federation.

Applications were invited on March 15, 2024 to fill up 11,307

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

Crash test data

Urban transport corporation claims mishaps involving its vehicles are on decline



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The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation has witnessed a 19.80% decrease in the number of accidents, the corporation has claimed.

In the meantime, BMTC officials blamed reckless driving by two-wheelers for most accidents.

BMTC has been seeing a decrease in the number of accidents over the years, it has been suggested. The 19.80 per cent decrease was in the number of accidents involving BMTC buses in 2023-2024 (until January), recording 166 accidents.

In 2022-2023, BMTC saw 207 accidents. In the last seven years, the corporation saw the lowest number of accidents in 2020-2021 with just 98 instances involving its vehicles. Officials noted that they have been making efforts to reduce accidents systematically.

"Accident reduction is a complex process. We have been conducting health checkups regularly, especially eye checkups, for the crew. We also subject our crew to continuous training on a zonal level by traffic wardens, traffic officials and subject matter experts. Almost daily, 40-50 drivers are sent to BTP's Traffic Management Centres where they get to visualise traffic violations. Nearly 800 of the crew received gold and silver medals post training sessions," said a senior BMTC official.

He added that they have also taken scientific measures to reduce stress amongst

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

3 THINGS TO DO



01 Bake a cake

Dive into the delectable world of baking with "The Art of Baking" event. Join for a delightful experience where you'll learn the secrets behind creating mouthwatering baked goods. From cakes and cookies to bread and pastries, this event promises to elevate your baking skills to new heights. Whether you're a novice or a seasoned baker, come indulge in a fun-filled and educational baking extravaganza! **When-** April 29 to May 19; **Where-** Small World, Koramangala



02 Dramatic summer

Unleash your child's creativity and confidence at the Acting Summer Camp for Kids! This exciting camp offers a unique opportunity for children to explore the world of acting through fun-filled activities, games, and workshops. Led by experienced instructors, kids will learn acting techniques, improvisation, character development, and much more. Whether your child dreams of being on stage or simply want to boost their communication skills, this camp is sure to inspire and entertain! **When-** April 29, 4 pm onwards
Where- Butterfly Talent Academy, Banaswadi

03 Candy land



Step into a world of sweetness and fun at the Kids Carnival: Candy Land! This delightful event is perfect for families looking to create lasting memories with their little ones. With vibrant decorations, exciting games, and sweet treats galore, children of all ages will be enchanted by the magic of Candy Land. From carnival rides to candy floss and everything in between, this event promises a day filled with laughter, joy, and sugary delights! **When-** Until May 27; **Where-** Nexus Shantiniketan Mall



Lace-up & run

A participant carries the national flag of India and runs in the TCS World 10k Bengaluru on Sunday.

KCET 2024: Out-of-syllabus questions axed, no retest

As KEA vows to rectify the situation, the focus remains on upholding fairness

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Amidst the Common Entrance Test (CET) controversy, the State Government clarified on Sunday that out-of-syllabus questions would be eliminated from the assessment in Karnataka Common Entrance Test (KCET) 2024. Additionally, in a significant relief to students, the government stated that there would be no re-conducting of the KCET exam for 2024. The KCET was conducted by the Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) on April 18th and 19th, 2024, covering subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Biology, with over 3 lakh students participating across the state.

Post-exam, news reports highlighted alleged out-of-syllabus questions in the papers, along with representations stating that many questions did not adhere to the syllabus, affecting students. Demands arose for grace marks, question removal, or a fresh exam.

An Expert Committee was formed to investigate these out-of-syllabus questions. After analysing the 2022-23 I PUC syllabus, the committee found that the out-of-syllabus questions stemmed from deleted chapters of the 2023-24 rationalised syllabus, specifically in Biology (11/60), Physics (9/60), Mathematics (15/60),

and Chemistry (15/60), totalling 50/240 questions.

"While the Committee identified several questions from deleted chapters, they also noted that some questions were within the syllabus and chapter of 1st PUC 2022-23, which students had studied the previous year and thus did not need to be deleted. In response, the Government directed KEA to address these out-of-syllabus questions to protect students' interests, maintain a level playing field, and uphold CET system credibility. Consequently, KEA will remove out-of-syllabus ques-

The committee found that the out-of-syllabus questions stemmed from deleted chapters of the 2023-24 rationalised syllabus, specifically in Biology (11/60), Physics (9/60), Mathematics (15/60), and Chemistry (15/60), totalling 50/240 questions

tions from the assessment, focusing solely on the remaining questions, including nine from Physics, 15 from Chemistry, 15 from Mathematics, and 11 from Biology. KEA will publish the answer key and out-of-syllabus question list on their website.



Students protest in front of KEA over out-of-syllabus questions asked in CET on Monday

Students' CET marks will be based on the remaining questions, with two questions with incorrect solutions receiving grace marks. There will be no KCET 2024 re-examination due to upcoming exams like COMEDK, JEE Mains, NEET, NEST, CUET, and II PUC second and third attempt exams. A re-exam at this point would cause undue hardship and delay professional course academic calendars," said an official.

To prevent future occurrences, KEA will create a detailed Standard Operating Procedure for setting CET question papers. The removal of out-of-syllabus questions and assessments based on remaining questions will ensure a fair playing field and prioritise student and examination system interests. CET

results will be announced by the end of May as scheduled.

Earlier, the Chief Secretary held discussions with the PU and KEA executive directors. Rame Gowda, a former IAS officer who served as both PU and KEA executive director, commented, "I don't think a re-test is viable. It would require extensive preparations. Conducting a re-test, especially the first in KEA's history, would tarnish the reputation of the CET, known as one of the toughest and best-managed tests in the country." Shashwathi Devi, a parent, expressed, "The CET fiasco is a major concern, particularly for rural students and those who didn't receive tuition. In future, I believe the papers should be rigorously evaluated for questions within the syllabus."

Swiggy ordered to compensate customer for undelivered order

Food delivery app ordered to pay Rs 5,000 after customer goes to court over ice cream that never arrived

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The consumer court in Bengaluru has ordered the food delivery aggregator giant Swiggy to compensate a customer with Rs 5,000 after failing to deliver an order of ice cream last year. Despite Swiggy's failure to initiate a refund, the customer opted to take the food aggregator to court.

In January 2023, the customer ordered a 'Nutty Death by Chocolate' from Cream Stone but did not receive the order despite paying Rs 187. Although the application status falsely indicated delivery, the complainant asserted that the order was picked up from the ice cream store but never reached them. Subsequently, the customer lodged a complaint with the aggregator. However, no refund was initiated, prompting the customer to escalate the matter to the consumer court.



Swiggy argued that it merely acts as an intermediary between the customer and third-party restaurants,

denying responsibility for the alleged delivery partner's mistake. It claimed inability to verify delivery status as the application indicated "delivered," and cited protection from liability under the Information Technology Act provisions.

Deeming it an 'unfair trade practice', a bench comprising President Vijaykumar M Pawale, V Anuradha, and Renukadevi Deshpande directed Swiggy to pay a total amount of Rs 5,000. The consumer forum ruled, "We are of the considered view that

the complainant has proved that there is a deficiency of service on the part of the OP (Opposite party/ Swiggy) since OP has not refunded the amount paid by the complainant though the ordered product has not been delivered to the complainant. The said acts of the OP amount to deficiency of service and also unfair trade practice." It also pointed out that the exemption didn't apply to the sale of goods and services under the provisions of the Information Technology Act.

New phone from bank? That's a con

Whitefield resident receives mobile handset for 'account upgrade'; puts in SIM, loses Rs 35,000 in 1 hour

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Despite alerts from the cyber crime department and the Reserve Bank of India about cyber crimes, the number of victims continues to increase day by day. Cyber crooks persist in using innovative methods to trap unsuspecting individuals and steal their hard-earned money.

The latest incident involves cheating a director of a private company in the city. According to a complaint lodged by Pradip from Whitefield with the Cyber Crime Police, a cyber crook claiming to be Mohit Jain called Pradip, stating that he was from Citibank and that they were sending a device to him as part of upgrading his card.

"Mohit Jain called me saying he is from Citibank and they are upgrading my card hence they are sending me a device and last night they sent me the device but it was a phone and then they asked me to put my sim in that and when I did, they said in 60 minutes verification can be done and after 60 minutes I checked there was a call forwarding system on the new phone and I checked my account...around Rs 35,000 was sent via imps and I called customer care and they blocked all my cards net banking and debit cards... I am still in touch with that person Mohit Jain," said Pradip in the complaint to the Cyber Crime Police.

The Cyber Crime Police have transferred the case to Whitefield Police Station since it falls under the same jurisdiction. "Luckily, I had access to the computer while following the directions from



The device sent to the victim as part of the scam

People should simply disconnect any calls from persons claiming to be from the bank, and immediately contact their bank for verification

—Pradip, victim

Mohit Jain. Within a few minutes, I came to know about the transfer of Rs 35,000 from my account. I immediately informed customer care to block all my cards, net banking, and debit cards. I need to go to the bank to activate all my cards and net banking on Monday. I am approaching Whitefield Police seeking suitable action against the accused person," said Pradip.

He wants to alert the general public about the unrealistic offers made by cyber crooks. "People should simply disconnect the call when they receive a phone call claiming to be from the bank, and immediately contact their bank for verification. It will save their money and precious time," he said.



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Banshankari Temple shuns plastic waste

Volunteers lead charge against plastic, cut landfill waste by 3.5 tonnes monthly

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Banshankari Temple has made an impressive stride towards environmental preservation! Since launching a campaign in January 2024 to eliminate plastic usage, the temple has successfully reduced landfill waste by an astounding 3.5 tonnes per month.

A dedicated team of over 380 volunteers, stationed strategically at the temple's entry points and patrolling its premises on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays, has played a crucial role in enforcing waste segregation practices. Their duties include inspecting bags for single-use plastics, confiscating any found, and ensuring proper segregation and disposal of dry waste. Information boards promoting a plastic-free and litter-free environment have also been installed, accompanied by 40 strategically placed waste drums throughout the temple premises.

The temple authorities have wholeheartedly embraced the campaign, offering unwavering support. Governmental organisations oversee on-site enforcement of regulations, while civil society groups and non-governmental organisations, in collaboration with educational institutions, focus on public education,



A volunteer segregating waste outside the temple

volunteer engagement, and resource allocation.

Vasuki Iyengar, a member of the Solid Waste Round Management Table (SWMRT) and a key figure in the zero-waste initiative, expressed his satisfaction with the progress. "This

is a significant achievement for us, achieved through collaborative efforts," he remarked. "Sustainability is key; we must continue to sustain these efforts to bring about lasting change."

The impact of the initiative is

evident in the drastic reduction of waste sent to landfills, down from over 6.5 tonnes to 3.5 tonnes per month. Waste segregation practices have been diligently implemented, with dry waste sent to a Dry Waste Collection Centre for recycling, and wet waste handed over to the local municipal authority. Various waste streams, including salt, lemon peels, and jaggery, are repurposed or recycled, contributing to the circular economy.

"This is a significant achievement for us, achieved through collaborative efforts. Sustainability is key; we must continue to sustain these efforts to bring about lasting change" –Vasuki Iyengar, member, Solid Waste Round Management Table

Moreover, innovative composting solutions have been deployed on-site to manage organic waste. Flowers are composted, vegetable peels are processed through an Organic Waste Converter (OWC) machine, and a mesh composter and tank composter have been installed for composting flower waste and cooked food waste, respectively.

Through collective action and a shared commitment to environmental sustainability, Banshankari Temple has emerged as a beacon of inspiration, demonstrating that even sacred spaces can lead the way towards a greener, more sustainable future. As the zero-waste journey continues, the temple serves as a shining example of the positive impact that can be achieved through concerted community efforts.

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Broken bus shed

Bellary Road



The bus shelter on Bellary Road opposite Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences is in a pathetic state and requires immediate repairs. Additionally, many stationary vehicles are illegally parked in this area, causing inconvenience to BMTC commuters.

Tree tangle

Austin Town



Remove tree branches surrounding the electric pole at Austin Town, Bettappa Garden.

Traffic Police crack down on defective silencers

Enforcement ramps up as city sees 500 cases in 3 months; bikers urge use of decibel metres

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The Bengaluru Traffic Police have been enforcing regulations on defective silencers, with almost 500 cases booked in just three months of 2024, compared to only 300 cases throughout the entirety of 2023. According to the data provided by the traffic police, the city recorded 494 cases of people using defective silencers, whereas the police had only booked 296 cases in 2023.

Bikers in the city say that lately, most people are using Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) Exhausts BS6 and BS6.2 models, and any change in exhausts voids the insurance. "The traffic department can use a DB (decibel) metre in case any aftermarket exhausts are installed. Though even after-



market exhausts come with a 'DB Killer' which keeps the noise similar to stock OEM exhausts. For anyone who removes DB killers, action should be taken against them.

A few of the older Royal Enfield exhausts were even changed by us before this rule as what the company manufactured for Royal Enfield's were longer and protruding out

of the vehicle. We changed to the shorter ones as they used to touch or hit potholes, or someone would have rammed from the rear. Even while touring Ladakh, Himachal, or NE, we kept the exhaust aftermarket and upswept so that in such terrains (off-road), exhausts shouldn't hit the boulders and the chances of the exhaust neck being cut from the

manifold. I think DB Killers should be checked in aftermarket exhausts along with a DB Meter where the exhaust note/sound should be at par with OEM's," said Dave, a biker.

However, many residents say that even when they spot vehicles with defective silencers, they don't see the traffic police taking any strict action.

"Recently my friend and I were travelling on our Scooty near Koramangala when suddenly a bullet with a modified silencer passed by. The interesting part was that the traffic police personnel were nearby and did nothing like taking a picture or stopping that person. He was just getting by his day as usual. In my opinion, in order to mitigate this, police should take prompt action such as taking the photo of the number plate or putting fines on the bike workshops where these silencers are modified," said a resident.

Faulty manhole

Kudlu Road



The manhole in front of an apartment's back gate on Kudlu Road is not fixed properly.

Hot fuss: B'luru is sizzling these days

Brace for 38 degree Celsius plus in city and no drizzle to ease the heat

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April is about to come to an end, so we have no option but to look forward to May with a hope that it will rain and bring down the city's Mercury level. However, going by the predictions, it looks likely to stay dry and sunny for many more days if not weeks. Worse, the city's temperature is breaching 38 degree Celsius.

According to an update from Namma Karnataka weather on X platform, "Bengaluru has finally stepped out of the ~37°C range, with Saturday hitting 38°C. Indeed, Saturday marked the hottest day of the year 2024, surpassing the previous highest of 37.6°C (99.68°F). After maintaining around 37°C for six consecutive days, Bengaluru reached 38°C.

Before Saturday, Bengaluru had experienced temperatures of 38°C or higher only three times in its recorded history: 39.2°C on April 24, 2016, 38.0°C on April 23, 2016, and 38.3°C in April 1931. This indicates how severe the Summer of 2024 has been. The record high of 39.2°C set in 2016 is likely to be seriously challenged in the next 3-4 days. This summer is among the worst in Bengaluru's recorded history."

M Rajavel, a scientist from the India Meteorological Centre in Bengaluru, has forecasted that for the next 48 hours, we can expect mainly clear skies. The maximum temperature is likely to be around 38°C, while the minimum temperature is expected to be around 23°C. "Currently, trough/wind discontinuity from Marathwada to north Tamil Nadu now runs from eastern parts of Vidarbha to north Kerala across Madhya Maharashtra, interior Karnataka and extends upto 1.5 km above mean sea level. The cyclonic circulation over the Comorin area and neighbourhood at 0.9 km above mean sea level has become less marked.

Hence, dry weather is very likely to prevail over the State. Heat wave conditions likely to prevail at

For the general public, it's advised to avoid direct sun exposure between noon and 3 pm and to stay hydrated by drinking water regularly, even if not feeling thirsty



A crow takes a dip in a fountain during a hot day in Bengaluru



Voters use hand fans amid hot weather in city while waiting in a queue to cast vote at BES college at Jayanagara 4th T block in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

isolated places Bidar, Kalburagi, Bijapur, Yadgir, Raichur, Bagalkot, Belagavi, Gadag, Haveri, Koppal, Ballari, Vijayanagara, Davanagere, Chitradurga, Tumkur, Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts. The maximum temperature very likely to be rise by 2-3°C over the State for next five days."

Take care of health

He cautioned that high temperatures pose an increased risk of heat-related illnesses, especially for individuals exposed to the sun for extended periods or engaged in heavy labour. "This concern is particularly heightened for vulnerable

populations such as infants, the elderly, and those with chronic health conditions. To address this issue during heat waves, several advisories are recommended for different groups. For the general public, it's advised to avoid direct sun exposure between noon and 3 pm and to stay hydrated by drinking water regularly, even if not feeling thirsty.

Wearing lightweight, light-colored, loose, and breathable cotton clothing is recommended, along with using protective gear like goggles, hats, and appropriate footwear when venturing out into the sun. It's also important to avoid

alcohol, tea, coffee, and carbonated drinks as they contribute to dehydration. High-protein and stale foods should be avoided, and if working outdoors, individuals should use hats, umbrellas, and damp cloths to keep cool."

Rajavel further added that special care should be taken for children and pets, ensuring they are not left in parked vehicles. Seeking immediate medical attention is advised if feeling faint or unwell. Oral rehydration solutions (ORS) or homemade drinks like lassi, torani, lemon water, or buttermilk can aid in rehydration. Animals should have access to shade and plenty of water, and homes can be kept cool using curtains, shutters, or sunshades, along with fans or damp clothing.

"Farmers and farm workers should also follow similar precautions, using hats, umbrellas, and damp cloth while working in the fields and providing shade and water for animals. Athletes are advised to avoid strenuous activities during peak heat hours. Travelers should carry water with them while on the move.

In areas with hot and humid conditions like Coastal Karnataka, although temperatures may be moderate, there is still a concern, especially for vulnerable groups. It's recommended to avoid excessive heat exposure, wear lightweight, light-colored, loose cotton clothing, and cover the head with a cloth, hat, or umbrella to mitigate the risks associated with hot and humid climates", he added.

And reservoirs are running out fast...

All 14 major reservoirs in Karnataka are at 24% of their total capacity

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Water levels in Cauvery basin reservoirs are depleting at an alarming rate. Data from the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre (KSNDMC) shows that the overall storage of water in the Cauvery basin reservoir has dropped to 27.9% of its gross capacity.

While the total capacity of all four reservoirs is 114.57 TMC, the current water capacity is 32.05 TMC.

On Saturday, the water storage of Harangi was at 36% of its total capacity, and Hemavati's water storage stood at 26%.

The Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) Dam, a crucial source of water for Bengaluru, is at 23.5% storage compared to total capacity. The water level in the dam is at 11.65 TMC against its total capacity of 49.45 TMC. Last year at the same time, KRS was holding 15.62 TMC.

Kabini, another important reservoir for Bengaluru, is slightly better at 39% storage. The current water level in the reservoir is 7.65 TMC, while its total capacity is 19.52.

Overall, all 14 major reservoirs in Karnataka are at 24% of their total capacity. While their total storage capacity is 895.62 TMC, they are currently holding 219.93 TMC of water. During the same time last year, the reservoirs had 267.21 TMC of water.

"Various factors, including high temperature this summer, lack of pre-monsoon showers, weak monsoon last year, and release of water from Cauvery basin to the neighboring state have led to the reservoirs with such poor water storage.

While we have had scattered rainfall days in some areas in Karnataka, more or less it has been dry so far, leading to further depletion of water. However, the fact that El Nino is weakening, we can expect good rainfall in the upcoming monsoon season. Till then we will have to manage somehow," said a city-based senior scientist and weather expert.

Reservoir level in southern states at 10-year low

According to a recent bulletin from the Central Water Commission (CWC), the southern region of the country - Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu - is grappling with water scarcity as reservoir levels have dipped to 10 year-low.

There are 42 reservoirs in these states under CWC monitoring having a total live storage capacity of 53.334 BCM. However, the total live storage available in these reservoirs is 8.865 BCM which is 17% of the total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.

The storage during the corresponding period of last year was 29% and average storage of the last ten years during the corresponding period was 23% of the live storage capacity of these reservoirs.

Thus, storage during the current year is less than the storage of the corresponding period of last year and is also less than the average storage of the last ten years during the corresponding period.



Turns out, it can go either way

Both BJP, Cong see 'good' voter turnout in Karnataka as favourable

Both the BJP and Congress, are confident that the "good" voter turnout in Karnataka's 14 Lok Sabha seats, which went to the polls on April 26, is favourable for them.

Karnataka has recorded 69.56 per cent turnout on April 26, according to the Election Commission. Barring Bengaluru's three parliamentary seats, all constituencies in the state witnessed over 70 per cent voting.

While state BJP President BY Vijayendra is claiming that the voting has been done in the favour of the BJP-JD(S) alliance, the Congress is saying that ground reports are suggesting that its seat tally will be greater than that of the BJP.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah after the polling said that he had spoken to the candidates and district in-charges and all of them had given him a positive feedback.

Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress President DK Shivakumar thanked the voters and said that his party would surely win seats in double digits.

Shivakumar also claimed that JD-S is saying that the BJP leaders have "not cooperated in Mandya and Hassan Lok Sabha constituencies and dharma of alliance was not followed. In the Bengaluru Rural seat as well, BJP leaders have not supported the JD(S)".

Both BJP and Congress are confident about winning the Hassan Lok Sabha seat, where the contest was primarily between former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda's grandson Prajwal Revanna and Congress' Shreyas M Patel. The constituency witnessed a 77.68 per cent voter turnout.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addresses an election rally in Bellary district, on Friday; Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets the gathering during a public meeting in support of the BJP candidate from Uttara Kannada seat Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, in Uttara Kannada on Sunday



The strengthen their claims, BJP and JD(S) sources claim that the Vokkaligas won't desert their "unquestionable" leader Deve Gowda. In addition to this, they are sure that a large chunk of Lingayat votes in Kadur, Sakleshpur, Belur and Arasikere assembly constituencies have come in support of the NDA candidate following the MCA student Neha Hiremath murder case. On the other hand, the Congress says that Prajwal Revanna had lost his chance after a scandalous pen drive against him surfaced before the election.

In Dakshina Kannada Lok Sabha seat, the BJP is confident of retaining the seat while the Congress is hopeful that the caste card will divide votes and its candidate Padmaraj will create history. The parliamentary seat saw 77.56 per cent turnout.

The Udupi-Chikkamagaluru Lok Sabha seat has registered a 77.15 per cent voter turnout and both the national parties are claiming to win the seat.

For the Chitradurga (reserved) Lok Sabha seat that registered 73.3 per cent polling, the Congress sources

say their party will win the seat because of the overwhelming support of Dalits, backwards and minorities, who have a significant presence in the constituency. Also, they claim that the party is benefitted by the internal strife within the BJP. The BJP, on the other hand, is relying on the Lingayat vote bank and is hopeful that it will emerge victorious.

For the Tumakuru Lok Sabha seat, BJP sources say that the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and reputation of BJP candidate V Somanna as a person who delivers will help the party to win. The Congress, on the other hand, is claiming that oppressed classes, minorities and Vokkaligas have voted for the party. The constituency witnessed a 78.05 per cent voter turnout.

With the high-profile Mandya seat seeing a turnout of 81.67 per cent, both NDA and Congress are claiming that the trend showed support for them.

Supporters of JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy say that the trend showed absolute support for him while the Congress claims that the Vokkaliga vote bank, which is decisive in the segment, is standing behind Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar, and thus its candidate will win from the seat.

BJP and Congress insiders agree that there is a tough fight between the two parties in Chikkaballapur and Kolar Parliamentary seats, and the margin of victories will be low.

For Bengaluru, the BJP claims that its dominance in three seats of the IT city will continue while the Congress says that results will surprise the rival party.

-IANS

'What have BJP MPs been up to?'

The Congress on Sunday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is indulging in "fear mongering" as he is "desperate" after facing a "washout" in the second phase of the Lok Sabha polls.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posed questions for the prime minister ahead of his rallies in Karnataka. "After the Phase II wash-out, a desperate PM is on a spree of Karnataka rallies today. Instead of lying and fear mongering, these are the questions he should answer," Ramesh said, listing his posers.

"Why have BJP MPs performed so poorly as the people's representatives? After a 7-month delay, why has the Centre released less than 20% of drought relief funds? Why is the Centre holding up the Upper Bhadra and Mahadayi projects?" the Congress leader said on X.

Elaborating on what he said were "jumla details", Ramesh asked where have BJP MPs been while the Modi government has been "unleashing its vengeance" on Karnataka.

Citing the latest data from the Parliamentary Research Service (PRS), Ramesh claimed that the BJP MPs from Karnataka have shown a blatant disregard for their responsibilities, and displayed lack of commitment to serving their constituents. "While the national average attendance in Parliament was 79%, the average of the 28 Karnataka MPs was even lower at 71%. The review revealed that 26 of these MPs never raised Karnataka's concerns - the release of MGNREGA funds, drought and flood relief assistance, and the Centre's denial of additional allocations of rice for PDS," he said. "Three MPs did not ask a single question in five years, and five MPs did not participate in a single debate," he alleged. "Perhaps the most damning finding was that 14 of the 28 were directly or indirectly involved in abetting communal violence in their localities. Will PM Modi apologise for foisting these ineffectual MPs on the people?" he said.

-PTI

Politics over health

The intensive election campaign can have a significant impact on politicians' health. DK Suresh, who contested from Bengaluru Rural, highlighted the challenge of coping with extreme heat during the campaign. He mentioned, "I often struggle to find time for healthy eating, sometimes having lunch as late as 5 pm. Since entering politics, I've developed BP issues and diabetes, but my commitment to work keeps me focused and driven."

GenX don't want in?

This election season witnessed a wave of young leaders stepping into the political



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

arena, sparking curiosity about DK Shivakumar's family and their potential entry into politics. When questioned, Aishwarya Hegde dismissed any plans to follow the political path, expressing content as an educator. She emphasised on her goal of nurturing future leaders rather than becoming one herself. DK Shivakumar echoed this sentiment, expressing weariness from legal battles and preferring that his children stay away from politics. Only time holds the answer to this intriguing question.

Healthier times

Just before the election campaign kicked off, HD Kumaraswamy underwent a valve replacement surgery and was back in action within two days, sparking speculation about the nature of his hospitalization. Addressing concerns from journalists, HDK explained, "I received a heart tissue valve with a lifespan of 10 years during my first operation in 2007. After its expiration in 2017, I delayed



a second replacement but faced severe pain recently. The latest surgery, lasting just 29 minutes, assures me of 15 more years." Here's wishing him continued good health.

VVIP in line

Numerous celebrities participated in the voting process, with some notable instances of humility and respect. When Rachita Ram was given an offer to skip the queue due to

her celebrity status, she declined it with a smile, preferring to stand in line like everyone else. Similarly, actor Darshan and his wife opted to wait in the queue rather than using their VVIP status to skip ahead, demonstrating their commitment to fairness and equality during elections.

Pen drive mystery

For the past few months, the term 'pen drive' has been making headlines in our state for all the wrong reasons. Previously, HDK had notably displayed a pendrive, claiming it held all the State Government's secrets, though the actual contents remained a mystery. Recently, rumours have surfaced about pen drives circulating that supposedly contain objectionable videos of an MP. When journalists questioned Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar about this, he remarked, "Now, it seems that the objectionable content seen on these pen drives could have been known earlier." However, HDK denied any knowledge of the incident, stating that the law would follow its course.

-Sridhar Vivan

Hope afloat: We are still alive

Jacks hits ton as Bengaluru crush Gujarat in IPL

Will Jacks unleashed a batting barrage at the Narendra Modi Stadium as Royal Challengers Bengaluru beat Gujarat Titans by nine wickets in the Indian Premier League on Sunday.

Jacks scored his maiden IPL hundred off 41 balls, finishing 100 not out, which included 10 sixes as Bengaluru chased down Gujarat's 200-3 in 20 overs with 24 balls to spare. Virat Kohli scored 70 not out off 44 balls at the other end as Bengaluru passed the victory target to reach 206-1 in 16 overs.

Chasing another high total to mathematically stay in contention for a knock-out spot, 10th placed Bengaluru made a hectic start. Kohli and opening partner Faf du Plessis (24) put on 40 off 23 balls.

Du Plessis holed out in the fourth over, marking the last wicket the Titans' attack would manage on the day.

Jacks started off slowly, allowing Kohli to take charge as he raced to 50 off 32 balls. It was the star batter's fourth half-century in the IPL this year and he also crossed the 500-run mark for this season. Kohli scored 20 more off the next 12 balls he faced, but he was a spectator at the non-striker's end for much of this period.

Jacks took charge, smacking Mohit Sharma for 29 runs in the 15th over. He raced to 50 off 31 balls, and then accelerated further.

The next 50 came off only 10 balls, a span that included six sixes and two fours.

Jacks smashed 29 runs off Rashid Khan's 16th over to bring a very early end to the proceedings.



Will Jacks and Virat Kohli run between the wickets during the match in Ahmedabad on Sunday

“You’ve done this day in and day out, you’ve won games for your teams, I’m not quite sure that if you haven’t been in that situation yourself, to sit and talk about the game from the box”

— Virat Kohli

Bengaluru had needed 53 off 36 balls and managed to get there from just 12. Earlier, Sai Sudharsan's 84 not out off 49 balls had rescued the hosts from 45-2.

Openers Wriddhiman Saha (5) and Shubman Gill (16) fell cheaply leaving the Titans stranded. Sudharsan then managed an 86-run stand off 45 balls for the third wicket with Shahrux Khan.

Khan hit five sixes to score 58 off 30 balls for his maiden IPL half-century. Scoring 50 off 34 balls,

Sudharsan then added another 69 off the last six overs with David Miller (26 not out).

Gujarat Titans stay seventh after 10 games with only four wins. Bengaluru stays 10th with three wins from 10 games.

Kohli hits back

Virat Kohli on Sunday hit back at critics taking aim at his hitting prowess in T20 cricket.

Despite Kohli's flowing form ahead of the T20 World Cup in

June, pundits have raised concerns over his strike-rate as compared to a new breed of T20 batters, who deal in sixes. “All the people who talk about strike rates and me not playing spin well are the ones talking about this stuff,” Kohli said in response to looking at his season stats. “For me, it's about winning the games for the team and there's a reason why you've done it for 15 years. You've done this day in and day out, you've won games for your teams, I'm not quite sure that if you haven't been in that situation yourself, to sit and talk about the game from the box.” “I don't want to be over-aggressive, want to keep the bowler guessing. They want me to go hard and get me out,” Kohli said.

— Agencies

Go cashless, use UPI on KSRTC buses very soon

Commuters can soon enjoy cashless travel with the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) as bus conductors will be equipped with Electronic Ticketing Machines (ETMs) capable of accepting Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and other cashless transaction modes.

The demand for introduction of cashless payment methods has been long-standing, with commuters often complaining of having to carry the stipulated fare amount to enjoy a hassle-free journey. The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of KSRTC told Bangalore Mirror that EbixCash Ltd. has secured a long-term contract to deploy the Intelligent Transport Management System (ITMS) within the corporation.

The system will enable seamless card payment and card validation, UPI payment, QR ticketing, and QR validation to manage various kinds of ticket transactions and digital payments, with the ability to charge and half-charge tickets, concession tickets, luggage tickets, passes, inspector tickets, police warrant tickets and much more. It will help the conductor with hassle free issuance of tickets while the corporation on the whole will benefit from receiving real-time information on tickets issued, revenue collected and other such details through a dashboard.

At present, the corporation uses GPRS-enabled ETMs. It will now be moving to smart ETMs. KSRTC in January had called for a tender for the selection of a technology solution provider for the supply, commissioning, and maintenance of ETMs with a comprehensive ticketing solution for the corporation on a rental basis for four years. The bidder was required to supply 10,245 ETMs and estimates made by the KSRTC said that 825 ETMs will be distributed to Bangalore Central, 595 to Ramanagar, 600 to Mandya, 1,435 to Mysore, 645 to Chamara-janagar, 730 to Kolar, 700 to Chikkaballapur, 800 to Tumkur, 740 to Hassan, 685 to Chikmagalur, 600 to Mangalore, 570 to Puttur, 490 to Davangere, 450 to Shimoga, 370 to Chitradurga, and 10 to Kempegowda Bus Station. The initial phase of the agreement spans five years.

— BMB

BM Finance Fundas

Your account is suspended: All about money mule transactions



Imagine waking up to a notice that your hard-earned money is no longer accessible, all because your bank account or debit/credit card has been blocked. This was the reality for a customer of an Indian bank, who took to social media to share his ordeal. His credit card had been blocked by the bank due to suspected 'money mule' transactions.

A similar incident occurred last year with an HDFC Bank customer whose bank account was blocked due to suspected money mule activity.

As per a X (formerly Twitter) post by HDFC Bank last year, “We regret the inconvenience. This is not the experience we want you to have. We note our branch official has contacted you on September 14, 2023 & inform you that account is blocked due to the suspected money mule and account is under investigation...”

What is a 'money mule' account?

A money mule account refers to a bank account that is used to receive and transfer funds acquired illegally on behalf of others.

A person may become a money mule intentionally or unintentionally and receive illegally acquired funds and help in its transfer to others. A fraudster may approach prospective victims (mule account holders) with some offers and ask the victims to lend, share or rent their bank accounts/ cards.

Sometimes fraudsters may cheat

a person through various means and use his/her bank account for money mule transactions.

“Money mule fraud is a significant problem globally. Frauds currently account for 40% of all crime, and the ease with which fraudsters use mule accounts continues to be a challenge. Some countries such as Singapore and the UK are creating data-sharing platforms to enable data sharing between institutions to counter such problems collectively,” says Anis Ahmed who is based out of UAE and advises financial institutions on Fraud and Financial Crimes domains. He is also the Chairman of MENA Chapter's for Association of Certified Financial Crime Specialists (ACFCS).

As per a 2024 report by BioCatch, a cyber security company, “At one partner bank in the country (India), BioCatch found 9 out of every 10 mule accounts went undetected.”

Why do banks block

bank accounts due to detection of money mule transactions?

Banking and cyber security experts have confirmed that there are at least five Indian banks, including HDFC Bank, who have been tracking money mule transactions. Banking fraud analytics experts say that banks first block the suspected money mule accounts and then launch an investigation.

A banking fraud analytics expert, who did not wish to be named, explained the reason why banks do this. “These operators move the money fast and by the time the original account holder would know what happened the money would be taken out into a thousand other bank accounts. This is why banks have to take real time action on the flagged bank account otherwise it would be too late to stop the money mule operation,” the expert said.

“Our software which helps in detecting money mule identities has

been used by the top 4 banks in India since the last one year. This software has detected hundreds of thousands of money mule identities which if left undetected would have cost millions in damage,” says Ranjan R Reddy, founder, Bureau, a cyber security software company.

What if the software gets it wrong?

Banks use multiple software and techniques to identify money mule transactions. According to Balaji Viswanathan, MD & CEO, Expleo India, a financial, engineering and technology consultancy company, “Indian banks employ various fraud detection software and techniques to identify money mule transactions. These methods are crucial in combating financial crimes, where individuals unknowingly or knowingly transfer illegally obtained money on behalf of delinquents.”

— By Neelanjit Das, ET Online

K'taka govt stages protest against Centre over drought relief



Karnataka's Congress government staged a protest on Sunday in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue on the premises of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, against the Central government over drought relief.

The protest was led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Dy CM and Karnataka Congress President D. K. Shivakumar. AICC General Secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala, Cabinet Ministers and prominent leaders also took part in the protest.

Shivakumar stated that the "struggle will not end here." The state

had given a memorandum over drought in September 2023. From September till date, the state has incurred a further Rs 50,000 crore worth of damages. "No one has got work and the Centre has not given funds under NAREGA. This has to be released," he said.

"The Central government had released over Rs 3,000 crore after being slammed by the Supreme Court. The money should have been released during the crisis. Now, in some time, rains will pour. If guarantees were not there life would have been difficult for people. We have saved them. More than four crore families have been benefited," he main-

tained.

"We were forced to approach the court as they did not respect the federal structure. We are not begging. We had managed to provide Rs 2,000 for farmers and managed the drinking water crisis. We are asking for our rights," Shivakumar stated.

The Centre released Rs 3,454 crore drought compensation on Saturday. The Karnataka BJP welcomed the gesture of the Central government while the Congress has stated that the amount is meagre compared to the demand of more than Rs 18,000 crores toward crop loss during the drought period. — IANS

Private players will make space more accessible: ISRO chief

Pprivate players in space technology will certainly help speed up the research in the field, Indian Space Research Organisation chairman S Somanath has said while interacting with space enthusiasts, through the official Instagram page of ISRO.

Replying to an observation that SpaceX, a private entity, has contributed more to space technology than most countries, Somanath on Saturday said America's tradition of encouraging private companies to involve themselves in building rocket engines and, in the case of SpaceX, to explore human flight vehicles can be replicated by India.

He said these companies are playing a crucial role in advancing technology, reducing costs and making space more accessible. It is possible for even private companies in India to develop these kinds of capabilities, he added.

However, he said this is only possible if the government supports the private entity, "For instance, some of the technology that is owned by NASA is transferred to Space X so that

they could develop faster. This is why SpaceX has made such strides, it had nearly 45 launches this year," said Somanath.

He said already there are two companies working in India – Skyroot Aerospace and Agnikul Cosmos. "We are all excited to see India going this way."

These companies have already tested launch vehicles. It is an interesting development," said the ISRO chairman.

According to him, Chandrayaan-4 mission is being developed as a continuation of the Chandrayaan series. "Prime Minister Modi has announced that India intends to land on the moon in 2040."

To achieve this goal, continuous moon exploration is necessary. Chandrayaan-4 will be the first step towards this objective. The mission aims to send a craft to the moon, collect samples, and bring them back to Earth. Eventually, when India is ready for human spaceflight, Indian astronauts will be sent on a Chandrayaan craft to the moon to conduct experiments and return safely," he added. **PTI**

Dengue fever cases surge in Udupi

After the recent rains, Udupi district has witnessed a concerning increase in dengue fever cases, prompting swift action from health authorities.

The district's health department has launched a comprehensive larvae survey aimed at combating the outbreak. With a focus on city areas where larvae infestation is suspected to be high, the department is spearheading an anti-larval and mosquito eradication programme across the district.

Since January this year, Udupi has already reported 47 cases of dengue. Last year's total number of cases was 635.

Dr Prashanth Bhat, Udupi's district vector-borne disease control officer, emphasised the importance of maintaining clean surroundings and preventing water from stagnating, especially as the rainy season approaches.

"Larvae are commonly found in unused freshwater, air coolers, and discarded tires. Early detection and elimination of these breeding grounds are crucial," Dr Bhat stated.

Recalling last year's surge in dengue cases in Udupi city areas during October, efforts were mobilised to control the mosquito population. Medical students from Kasturba Medical College in Manipal, collaborated with the Department of Community Medicine, Udupi District Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (DVBDCP), and District Health and Family Welfare Department to conduct mosquito control initiatives.

Similar concerted efforts are underway this year to curb the spread of dengue.

Over the past few years, dengue cases in Udupi have fluctuated, with 513 cases reported in 2022, 380 cases in 2021, and 139 cases in 2020.

Notably, the presence of migrant worker accommodation units in the district necessitates extra vigilance, as migrant labourers are considered a high-risk group for dengue fever, the official said. **PTI**

What's ailing BBMP's civic staff hiring

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

vacancies for the posts of civic workers and the deadline for submitting the applications was April 15, 2024. However, the deadline is extended till May 15 due to the model code of conduct on the eve of Lok Sabha elections.

"Around 6,000 civic workers, who have been working on contracts for many years, have raised objections on selecting those who put up a few years service. The BBMP authorities, based on the complaints and objections, have ensured the selection process is free

from criticism. The list of 3,673 candidates selected last year for the posts of civic workers will be announced along with the list of those who get selected for 11,307 posts of civic workers," said M Subbarayudu, general secretary, Bangalore City Corporation Workers' Federation.

He said if the BBMP avoided confusion and announced the list of candidates selected last year for 3,673 posts, the selected workers (3,673) would have availed two increments and job security.

Meanwhile, M Nirmala, president, BBMP Pourakarmikara Sangha,

said BBMP authorities have been delaying filling up the vacancies for civic workers posts. "The BBMP authorities are not serious in filling up vacancies for the posts of civic workers," said Nirmala.

On an average, each civic worker gets Rs 30,000 per month if his/her services are regularised. The norm to apply for the post of civic worker is that he/she should have completed two years either on temporary or contract-basis.

The applicant's age should be below 55 years as on March 2023 and she/he should be an Indian citizen.

'BMTc making efforts to reduce accidents systematically'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

drivers. "We have rescheduled around 1,000 routes to meet the real running time. Using real-time and GPS data, we found the actual running time as compared to the estimated time. The new running time was adjusted based on the actual running time. This allows crew to operate in a stress-free environment," he added.

However, for the number of BMTc accidents of late, BMTc officials blamed the reckless driving of two-wheelers.

"Whenever an accident occurs, we study the accident. BMTc has been engaging in this study for the

past six months. In 70-75 cases, it's the reckless driving of two-wheelers. Out of 10 cases, BMTc crew may be responsible for 4-7 cases," he added. Mobility experts suggested regular training, counselling and stress management techniques for the staff.

"The numbers are not alarming for running 6,000 buses across roughly 900 sq km of space. But drivers and conductors should undergo routine training for driving and traffic rules. They should also undergo CPR and First Aid training as they are often the first responders at accident sites. BMTc should also consider smaller buses that would allow better control and

reduce the space occupied by its vehicles on roads. Additionally, bus bays must be protected with technology. Bus bays should be monitored by cameras and made zero-tolerance zones. Any other vehicle stopping at bus bays should be heavily penalised. To reduce the stress of drivers, BMTc should offer counselling services and stress-management techniques. Drivers have to be responsible and ferry 40-50 passengers and they also have personal problems weighing on them. There should be services like yoga, and meditation to allow drivers to become stress-free when they stop at depots," said Rajkumar Dugar, a mobility expert.

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Satyanarayana Age 60, Missing from Banashankari, Bangalore, Mentally retarded. Suitable reward is considered 10000. Contact: 9986450482

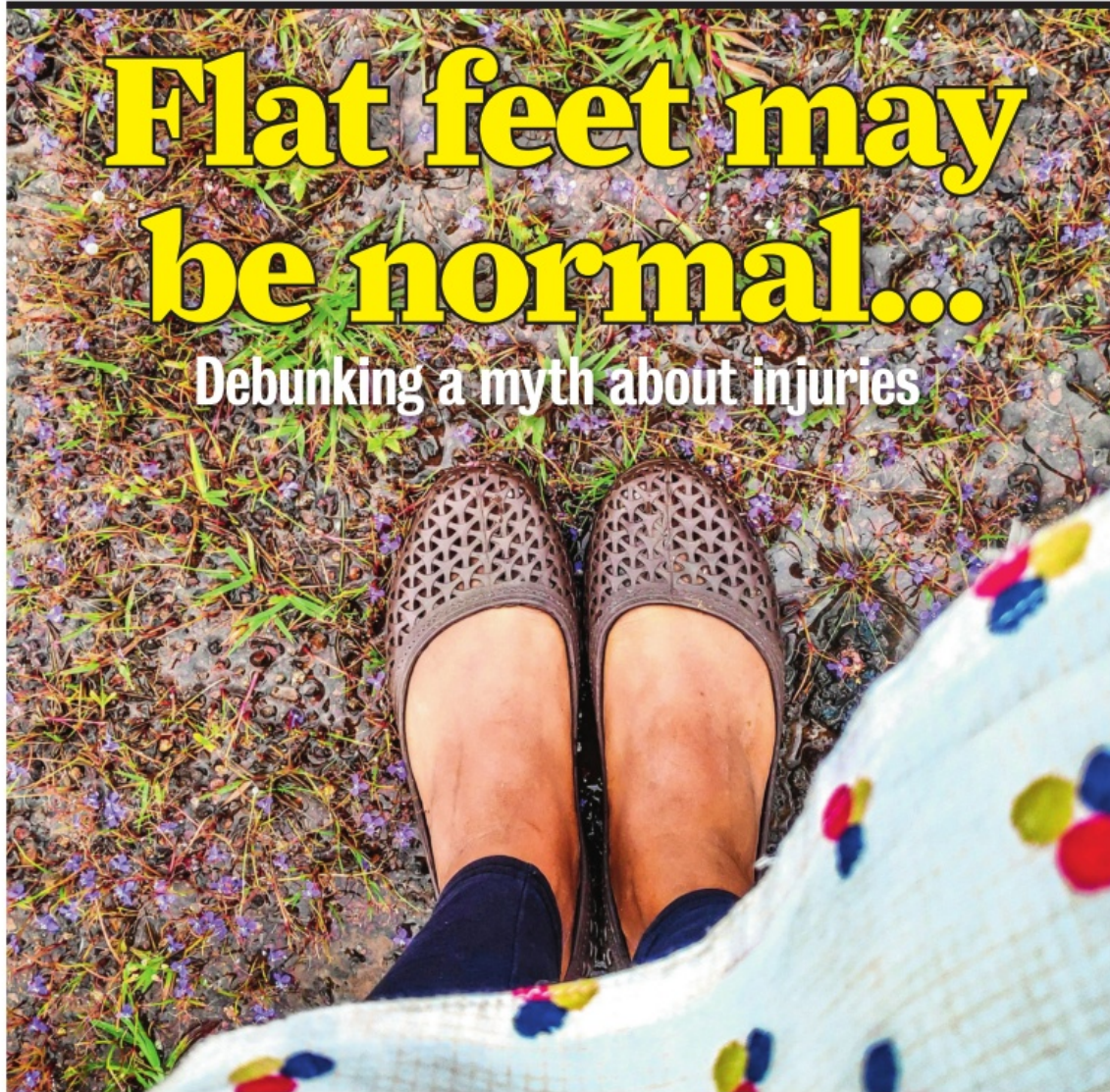


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Flat feet may be normal...

Debunking a myth about injuries



For many decades, if not centuries, researchers, medical professionals and the general population have believed that people with flat feet are more prone to developing a variety of problems.

Specifically, having flat feet was believed to predispose individuals to future pain and other musculoskeletal problems (i.e. to muscles, tendons and/or ligaments).

Flat feet were believed to be a kind of time bomb.

However, in a recent editorial published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, my research team challenges this myth. We demonstrate that the theory that having flat feet inevitably leads to pain or other musculoskeletal problems, is unfounded.

As a researcher in podiatric medicine at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR), I will explain the main conclusions of our study here.

Where does this theory come from?

The idea that flat feet are a problem dates back centuries.

It was revived in the second half of the 20th century by the American podiatrists Merton L. Root, William P. Orien and John H. Weed, who popularized the concept of "ideal" or "normal" feet.

These clinician-researchers were the first to propose that if feet did not meet the specific criteria of normality (for example, a well-defined plantar arch, a straight heel in line with the tibia) they were abnormal, less efficient and more prone to injury because of

multiple biomechanical compensations, such as greater arch flattening while walking.

This theory became central to the educational programs of health professionals. Although today it is gradually disappearing as modern curricula are updated, the theory was taught for almost five decades throughout the world, even though the scientific basis was weak. In fact, science has never validated the theory: it has remained at the hypothesis stage. Nevertheless, over the years up until the present, many health professionals have continued to support the theory that flat feet pose a major risk for developing musculoskeletal disorders.

As a result, this idea is still firmly anchored in the beliefs of the general public.

Do flat feet cause musculoskeletal injuries?

Contrary to the theory of Root and colleagues, meta-analyses, the highest level of scientific evidence, have shown no increased risk of developing the vast majority of musculoskeletal injuries among people with flat feet.

These meta-analyses only identified weak links between having flat feet and the risk of developing medial tibial stress syndrome (pain in the tibia), patellofemoral syndrome (pain around the kneecap),

and non-specific overuse injuries of the lower limbs. That's it.

Furthermore, a systematic review and a meta-analysis concluded that runners with flat feet are no more at risk of injury than those with regular feet.

These analyses call into question the idea that people with flat feet have a substantial risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders. However, despite these findings, various sources such as grey literature, professional websites,

forums and other media, often suggest that people with flat feet run a higher risk of injury, or even

require treatment — even when they don't have any symptoms. Unfortunately, this frequently results in people having unnecessary interventions, such as using orthopaedic shoes or custom-made foot orthoses for asymptomatic flat feet. It also leads to significant concerns among patients about the appearance of their feet.

Setting the record straight

Asymptomatic flat feet generally do not require the intervention of health professionals. Based on current scientific knowledge, assessing whether a person has flat feet to determine their risk of injury is ineffective and counterproductive. While it is possible for a person with flat feet to develop a

musculoskeletal injury, this does not necessarily mean that flat feet caused the injury.

It is quite possible for two variables to be present at the same time without there being a causal link. There is an important difference between a causal link and a correlation. A cause-and-effect relationship implies that a change in one variable (the cause) leads to a change in another variable (the effect). When two variables are correlated, changes in one variable may be associated with changes in the other, but this does not mean that one causes the other.

To illustrate the concept, let's take the following example: we give 500 children aged six to 12 the same math test. By carrying out correlation tests, we notice a trend: the bigger the children's feet, the higher their final mark in the exam.

This raises the question, does foot size really influence mathematical skills? Of course not!

Another variable that is not taken into account, age, plays a major role in this correlation. Since feet get bigger as we grow older, there is a strong but false correlation! The same principle applies to flat feet. If a musculoskeletal injury occurs in a person with flat feet, current research indicates that flat feet are not necessarily the cause and that other factors need to be explored. The link is one of correlation, not cause and effect.

Reducing overdiagnosis in health care has become crucial. This phenomenon, defined as the diagnosis of a condition that brings no net benefit to the individual, constitutes a global burden with potential adverse effects on patients' physical, psychological and financial well-being.

In financial terms, it is easy to understand that prescribing custom-made foot orthoses costing hundreds of dollars to prevent musculoskeletal injuries associated with asymptomatic flat feet, has a substantial negative impact. This is especially true given that the presence of flat feet only slightly increases the risk of developing these injuries.

To solve this problem, health-care professionals must help to reduce the overdiagnosis of flat feet by making a clearer distinction for their patients between harmless anatomical variants, and conditions of potential concern.

Since overdiagnosis often leads to overtreatment, avoiding unnecessary treatments will help to alleviate patients' concerns about their flat feet. Finally, we must abandon the outdated idea, still widespread, that says having flat feet is a problem that exposes individuals to a high risk of musculoskeletal injury. It's time to change our perspective and our approach to the significance of flat feet and to recognize their natural diversity in the context of overall foot health.

Above all, it's time to consider asymptomatic flat feet for what they are... simply an anatomical variant!

(By Gabriel Moisan, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR), The Conversation)

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

Effect of traffic noise

Bad for heart

Spike in traffic noise can increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including heart attack, researchers have found. Having found evidence linking traffic noise and the risk of developing heart and related conditions, researchers are calling for this type of noise pollution to be recognised as a risk factor for cardiovascular diseases.

More noise, greater risk

In their review, the researchers found evidence that for every 10 decibel increase in noise coming from road traffic, the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, including heart attack, stroke and diabetes, heightened by 3.2 per cent.

Night blues

In particular, they said, night-time traffic noise that disrupts and shortens sleep time can increase levels of stress hormones in the blood vessels, thereby promoting inflammation, high blood pressure and vascular diseases.

"It is also important for us that traffic noise is now finally recognised as a risk factor for cardiovascular disease due to the strong evidence," Thomas Münzel, senior Professor at the University Medical Centre Mainz, Germany, and lead author of the study published in the journal Circulation Research, said.

Solutions

The researchers also suggested strategies for local authorities to mitigate noise from road, rail and air traffic.

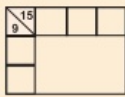
Erecting noise barriers along busy roads in densely populated areas can significantly reduce noise levels up to 10 decibels, they said.

Constructing roads using noise-reducing asphalt has been shown to reduce levels by 3-6 decibels, the authors said. Other strategies they suggested included limiting driving speed, and developing and promoting the use of low-noise tyres.

-PTI

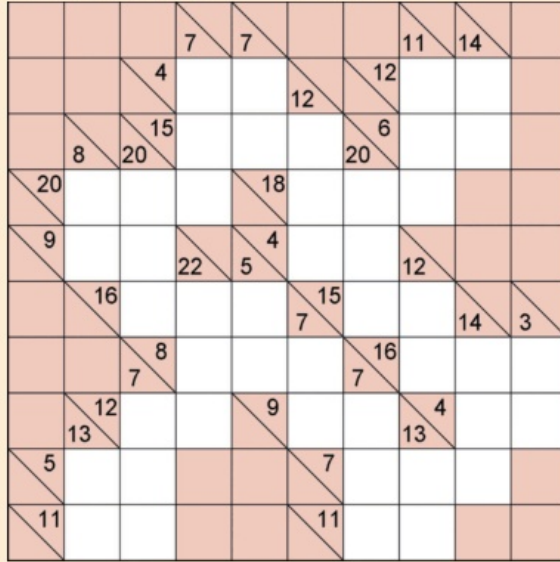
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

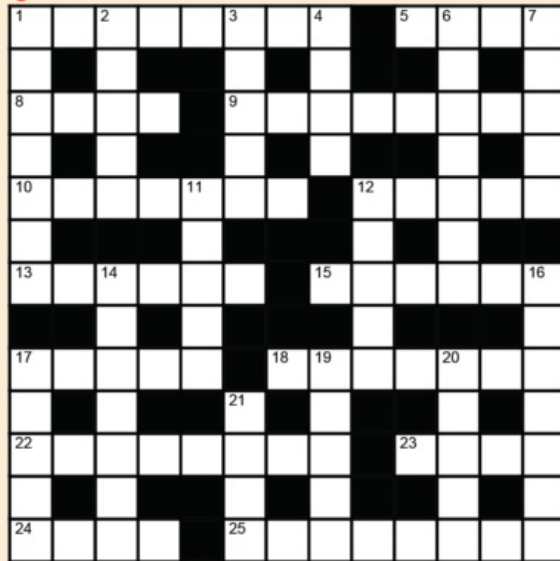


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 1 Setting alight, igniting (8)
- 5 You will find the remnants of his fort in the City Market area (4)
- 8 Jane Austen heroine (4)
- 9 Cite pill anagram as being oval-shaped (8)
- 10 Milliner or dress-maker (7)
- 12 City in Gujarat (5)
- 13 Suckling animal (6)
- 15 Lay-out, arrangement (6)
- 17 Not urban (5)
- 18 Odontologist (7)
- 22 Kneecaps? (8)
- 23 Japanese mountain (4)
- 24 Canal or Lake (4)
- 25 Popular breakfast fare (5,3)

DOWN

- 1 Say nothing? (4,3)
- 2 Indicated or identified (5)
- 3 Non reactive (5)
- 4 Festive occasion (4)
- 6 In the ____ : in the meanwhile? (7)
- 7 Full-length (5)
- 11 Will (5)
- 12 Eating utensil (5)
- 14 State language of Maharashtra (7)
- 16 ____ up : adding of separate items? (7)
- 17 Indian monetary unit (5)
- 19 Tropical resin (5)
- 20 Harden by habituation (5)
- 21 A musical symbol (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: F EQUALS Y
WMME FBPZ TMVZI NB
FBPZIMRT, CPN IUVMZM FBPZ
LBPZVDM SXNU BNUMZI.



Linemaro

There isn't a word in the dictionary for how pretty you look



Mindchow

If you let go of the past, it no longer has a hold on you



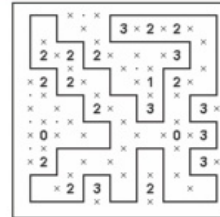
Joke of the day

When I told my friends I was going to be a comedian, they laughed at me

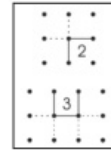
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

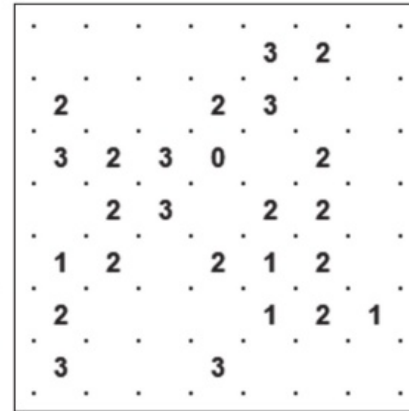


(Fig B) Not Allowed

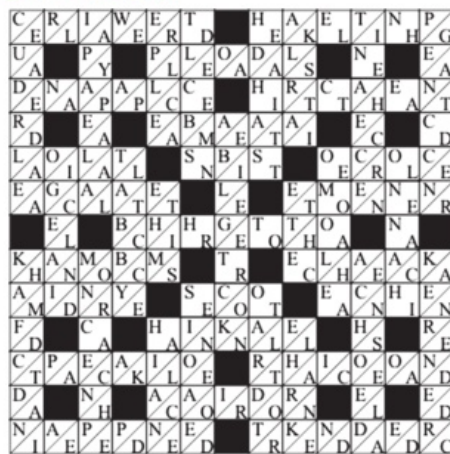
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



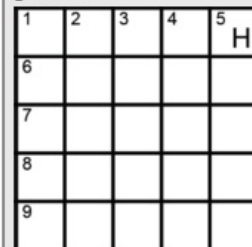
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

- 1 HL act; 6 O, ahoy;
- 7 All II; 8 In EEC;
- 9 Its FG

DOWN

- 1 G inly; 2 Ail I a;
- 3 He Fit; 4 To ACC;
- 5 Sol he

Mensapuzzle

What number should replace the question mark?

3	2	8	4
7	6	9	3
9	5	6	4
2	1	9	?

Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 06 Outstanding



SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ = 10

3 5 6 8

Medium

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ = 10

2 6 8 9

Hard

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ = 1

2 4 8 3

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Mouth is not open as wide. 3. Bush is missing. 4. Cap is larger. 5. Mower handle is longer. 6. Tire is thicker.

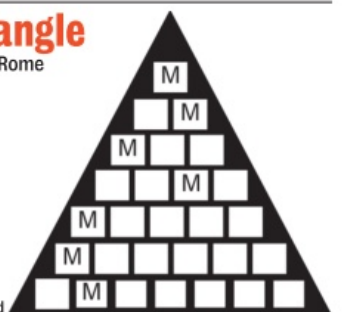
Riddler

Within my veins no blood will flow Yet I am quite alive. I bask in Summer sunshine's glow And for a while I thrive. But when the chilly winds blow I, Bedecked in gold and red, Will tumble from my station high And join the many dead. Who or what am I?

Alpha triangle

- 1 10x100 in ancient Rome
- 2 In the morning
- 3 Mothers
- 4 Ditto
- 5 Former fillies
- 6 Creators
- 7 Goes on board

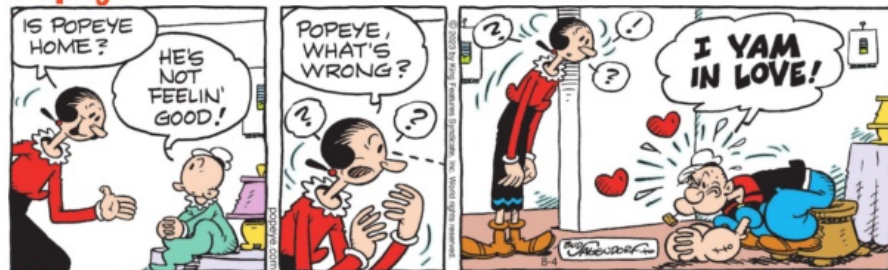
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today, you may feel energetic. You may perform efficiently at work, and your hard work may pay off now, boosting your confidence. Property-related disputes with siblings are likely to be resolved. Your meeting with an influential person may boost your network, and disputes with your partner may also be resolved.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Today, there may be peace of mind. Planning to invest capital in the business may increase liquidity. Romantic moments with your spouse may enhance family harmony. Singles may find a good match, and lovebirds may decide to get married.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Today, you may be busy at work and enthusiastic, speeding up your projects. Quick decisions may increase business prospects, and starting a new innovation in partnership may be likely. However, investments in fixed assets in partnership are not advised.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

Today, you are blessed by the moon, making you happy. You are polite with the people around you. You may make some difficult decisions in business with the help of your family members. You are likely to secure a big order with your communication skills, which may increase business prospects.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

Today, you may be very happy as your losses may turn into profits. Your boss may appreciate your work, and you may experience changes in your position at work, possibly promotions. You are likely to control opponents and hidden enemies. Lovebirds may make important decisions regarding marriage with the help of relatives or friends.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Today, you are blessed by the moon, performing well at work. Expect promotions or transfers, and relations with seniors will be strong. Old health issues may be cured now.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

Today you are not blessed by the moon. You may feel unhappy and impatient today. You may find yourself performing your tasks at work and may not be able to fulfill your desires. You want to be removed from your given responsibilities. You may not be able to complete work on time if you procrastinate a lot.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Today, the moon is positive, and your health may be good. You may visit a religious place with family or friends and plan to donate to charity. Property deals may be done, and plans for overseas travel related to work or higher education may be made.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Today, you are blessed by the moon. Enjoy work and stay focused, reflecting positively on your work. Your wisdom will help in making tough decisions in your profession, and past investments may give profits.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Today, you may be disappointed. You are advised to control your arrogance, as harsh speaking may lead to losses. Lovebirds should be careful in discussions, as they may affect relationships.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

Today, the moon is negative, and you may be a victim of conspiracies. Avoid getting involved in controversies and arguments in domestic life. Be cautious while driving and avoid adventure tours.

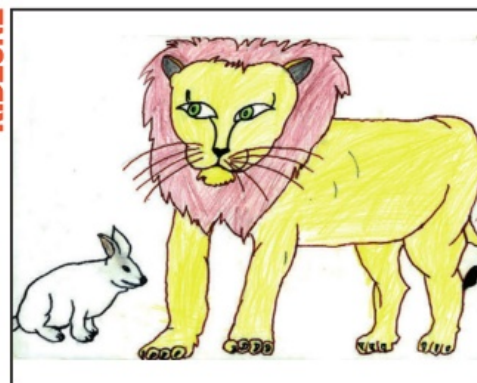


Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

Today, you may feel dull and dissatisfied, affected by arrogance, which may impact both professional and domestic life. A lack of confidence may hinder creativity at work.



KIDZONE



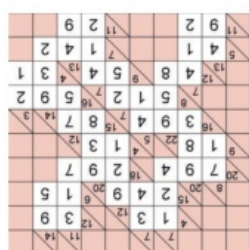
Soni V, 6 Years, Metropolitan Central School



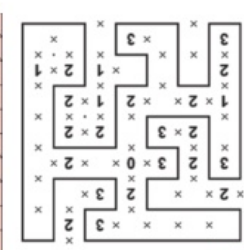
Shreyas P S, 6 Years, NCFE School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

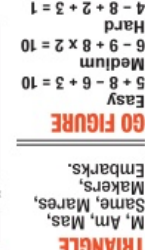
SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



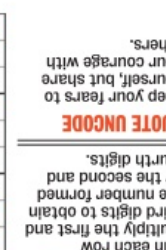
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



QUICK



STRIKE OUT



BULL'S EYE

SOLVE IN 10

Boundaries, folks

Taapsee talks about tackling paparazzi in B-Town

Bollywood's versatile actress Taapsee Pannu recently addressed the challenges of navigating the paparazzi culture in the industry.

In an interview with the Hindustan Times, Taapsee expressed her discomfort with the aggressive tactics employed by some paparazzi, emphasizing the need for mutual respect.

She said that paparazzi often go beyond their limits to get clickbait photos and captions for their Instagram pages, a behavior that makes the 'Dunki' actor uncomfortable.

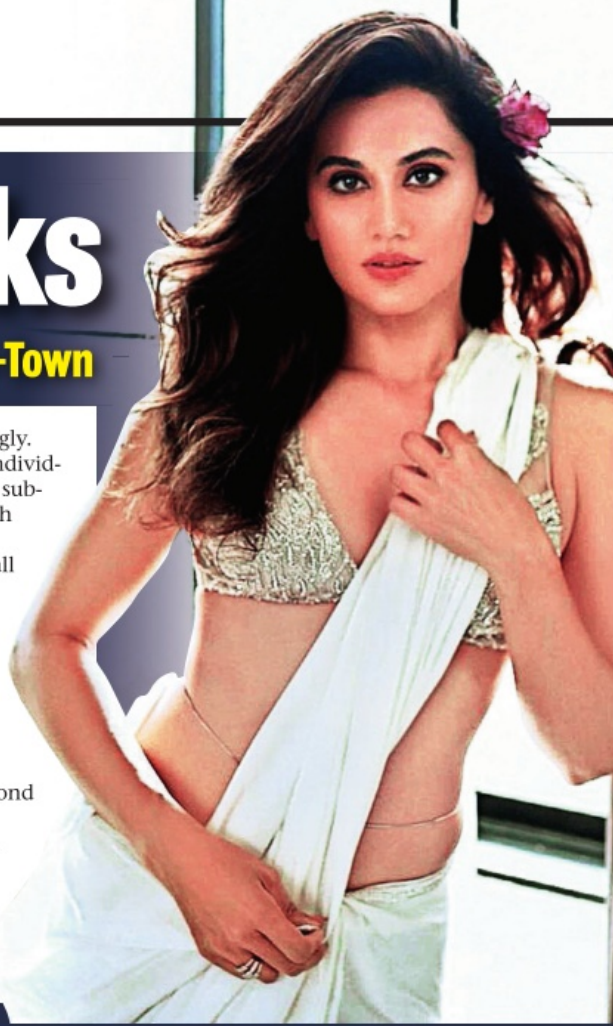
Reflecting on her stance, the actress highlighted the importance of setting boundaries and maintaining dignity in interactions with the paparazzi. She shared her reluctance to conform to the expectation of being overtly submissive, describing the term 'Lajvanti' as a representation of those who comply with the

paparazzi's demands unquestioningly.

She explained, "It's meant for individuals who attempt to be excessively submissive and sweet, going along with whatever the paps say, and simply laughing it off, feeling ignorance, all of which is perceived as charming and endearing. Sorry, but I can't be Lajvanti." "If you shove the camera in my face without my consent at places where I'm not in a professional capacity, it's not fair to expect me to be suddenly entertaining you," Taapsee said. "I feel I am allowed to have a life beyond my work as an entertainer, too."

Meanwhile, Taapsee has several highly anticipated upcoming projects, including the director Mudassar Aziz's upcoming comedy film 'Khel Mein'.

-ETimes



SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Multiple talents

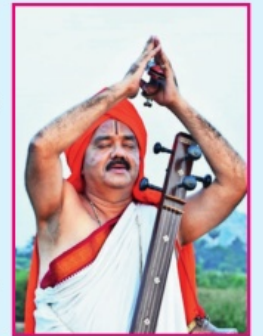
Meeet Trivikram Joshi, a multi-talented person from Raichur district in North Karnataka.

Joshi, basically a mechanical engineer, who used to be a translator for BJP leaders is also an actor. He played the role of Vijayadasaru thrice in three movies and is set to play the same role in one more movie shortly.

It all happened when Joshi attended the muhurat pooja of Kannada movie Sri

Jagannatha Dasaru at Mantralayam as one of the guests. The movie was based on a famous Haridasa scholar. "I switched on the camera during the muhurat. Director Madhusudhan Havaladar approached me to play the role of Vijayadasaru. Initially, I declined as I had no training in acting but the director insisted that I play the role. I told the director not to compromise with the quality but he was happy with my acting skills," said Joshi.

He played the lead in the recently released movie Dasavarennya Sri Vijayadasaru. Now, the arrangements are being made for commencing the shooting of a sequel to Dasavarennya Sri Vijayadasaru. "The muhurat function of the movie is expected to be held on May 2 or 3," he said.



Love me, hate me

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan', starring Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff, was one of the most expensive movies released this year, with an allegedly huge budget of Rs 350 crore. Alaya F, who played an undercover asset for the armed forces and coding expert in the film, talked about the same for the first time.

During an interview with News18 Showsha, she discussed how she had always known that a commercial pot-boiler would not win over critics. She shared, "It didn't bother me because I feel that I got a lot from the film. I managed to reach a new audience who perhaps didn't know of me. When you're making a film of that scale and an action masala one at that, the reviews aren't going to be all about critical acclaim."

Alaya acknowledges that her character Pam was subjected to conflicting viewpoints. She said, "I was just happy that I received visibility. Let people send me some hate and get angry (laughs). That also works. And anyway, the fact remains that every film has its own journey and fate."

-ETimes

London calling

Amidst the hustle and bustle of daily life, Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif sought a tranquil respite in London. The couple delighted fans by posing for a cheerful selfie, radiating joy during their getaway.

Katrina exuded effortless glamour in a white hoodie paired with a black overcoat and stylish black shades, while Vicky opted for a casual look in a white T-shirt layered with a jacket and complemented by black shades.

Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif exchanged vows in a private yet opulent ceremony at Six Senses Fort Barwara, Rajasthan, on December 9, 2021. Although audiences await their on-screen chemistry, their affectionate displays on social media and public appearances hand-in-hand consistently set relationship benchmarks.

On 'Koffee With Karan 8,' Vicky shared the details of his proposal to Katrina before their Rajasthan wedding.

Blushing under Karan Johar's questioning, Vicky confessed that their hectic schedules made planning an elaborate proposal challenging. He went on to reveal that he ultimately proposed by going down on one knee the night before their wedding, in their hotel, surrounded by friends and family. He described the proposal as a spontaneous decision made under pressure from friends and family.

-ETimes



Sonali on her cancer diagnosis

Sonali Bendre recently reflected on her experience coping with her cancer diagnosis. Bendre, known for her openness about her battle with cancer, shared her journey in a podcast for Humans of Bombay.

When asked how she coped with her cancer diagnosis and her initial reaction, Sonali shared her experience. Initially, upon receiving the diagnosis, her immediate thought was, 'Why me?' She thought she would wake up believing it was all a nightmare, unable

to accept that it could happen to her.

However, she gradually shifted her mindset. Instead of dwelling on 'why me?' she began questioning, 'Why not me?' Sonali mentioned that she began to feel grateful that the situation was not occurring to her sister or her son.

She acknowl-



edged that she had the strength to cope with it, access to the best hospitals, and a support system to assist her through the ordeal. By embracing the question 'why not me?' she initiated the healing process.

Sonali, who was diagnosed with stage four metastatic cancer in 2018, under-

went treatment at a hospital in New York City and achieved remission in 2021. Since her recovery, she has been actively advocating for cancer awareness and supporting survivors. In a post on Cancer Survivors Day in 2021, she reflected on her journey, stating, "Looking back, I see strength, I see weakness, but most importantly, I see the determination to not let the C word define my life thereafter... You shape the life you desire. The journey is what you make of it..."

-ETimes

Son rises

The shooting of the much-awaited pan-India movie Subrahmanya has begun at Rockline Studios recently. Advay Ravishankar is playing the lead. "The first schedule of the shooting was held for six days. I am very happy with the progress," said Advay.

Advay's father P Ravishankar, a versatile dubbing artist and an actor known for villainous roles, is handling the megaphone apart from having written its screenplay. When asked if it was easy for him to face the camera as his father is directing the movie, he said,

"We were like friends on the sets. Both of us valued each other's opinions and suggestions during the shooting. We are artists outside home. He will be a director and I will be an actor on the sets. At home, we are father and son. I want to be a different actor. I know that I am coming from a family of artistes but I want to be recognised as Advay and not as the son of Ravishankar," he said.

